

## ABSTRACT

### GEORGIA INDEPENDENCE PLUS INITIATIVE

Georgia is committed to self-determination. This grant proposal addresses barriers to developing and implementing a self-directed home and community service delivery system for individuals with disabilities and elderly people. Several important factors have influenced the recent design and delivery of Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) in Georgia, including: (1) the Olmstead Supreme Court Decision; (2) the *HCBS Quality Framework*; (3) the need to improve access to and simplify eligibility for HCBS waivers; (4) acceptance and adoption of person-centered planning throughout the community-based delivery system; (5) transformation of the community mental health system; and (6) receipt of numerous federal grants to plan for and implement systems change.

A meeting of self-advocates, family members, advocates, providers, and state agency representatives was convened to identify the needs to be addressed by this grant application. The goals of Georgia's Independence Plus Initiative are: 1) to develop a uniform individual budget methodology; 2) to modify the quality assurance/quality improvement system for home and community based waiver programs; 3) to design key operational functions of the self-directed service delivery system; 4) to develop a self-determination master plan; and 5) to design a self-determination pilot for adults with serious mental illness.

Grant products include: 1) a formula for calculating individual budgets; 2) a guide for individuals and families on individual budget methodology; 3) a revised incident management system; 4) an individual and statewide emergency back-up system; 5) selection criteria for supports brokers; 6) development of flexible financial management services; 7) a master plan for self-determination; and 8) development and submission of Independence Plus waiver application(s). These products represent Georgia's commitment to develop a system of individual and family directed community services for all ages and disabilities.

Collaboration is an integral part of every phase of this grant application. The Consumer and State Task Force will oversee the proposed Independence Plus Initiative. Several project specific and time-limited stakeholder work groups will be convened. Focus groups will also be held across the state to ensure individual and family input on major system design issues.

The total amount of the proposed three-year budget is \$454,850 (\$432,108 federal and \$22,742 state). The Independence Plus Initiative described in this grant application has specific outcomes with the end result of a master plan for self-determination in Georgia. The overall goal is to develop a comprehensive system of self-directed supports and services for individuals with disabilities and elderly people.